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Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 COME-00 TRSE-00 INT-05
OES-09 GSA-02 STR-07 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 /064 W
----------090370 050041Z /13
R 040521Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3982
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EMIN, AS
SUBJ:POSSIBLE NICKEL DIALOGUE

REF: STATE 183006(NOTAL)

1) EMBASSY PROVIDED USG'S RESPONSE TO GOA ALONG LINES REFTEL REGARDING GOA'S INITIATIVES ON POSSIBLE NICKEL DIALOGUE. GOA'S REACTION WAS THAT THEY ARE FRANKLY DISAPPOINTED IN USG'S VIEWS. GOA HASTENS TO NOTE AND TO RE-EMPHASIZE THAT THERE IS NOT NOW AND NEVER WAS ANY INTENTION TO USE THE GOA PROPOSED "INTER-GOVERNMENTAL DISCUSSION GROUP" FOR PURPOSES OF MARKET INTERVENTION. THE AUSTRALIANS SAY THAT THEIR INTENTION IS TO CREATE A CLIMATE OF "GREATER TRANSPARENCY IN THE MARKET ". BY THIS THEY MEAN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON PRODUCTION, MARKETING, PRICES, AND INVESTMENTS WHICH WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF BRINGING INVESTMENTS INTO LINE WITH MARKET DEVELOPMENTS. THEY NOTE THE USG'S VIEWS WITH RESPECT TO THE DEPRESSED STATE OF THE INDUSTRY AS SEEMING TO RESULT FROM INVESTMENT DECISIONS AT THE
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ENTERPRISE LEVEL AND SUGGEST THAT THIS IS PRECISELY ONE OF THE REASONS FOR THE GOA INTETEREST IN AND PROPOSAL FOR AN "INTERGOVERNMENTAL DISCUSSION GROUP".

2. AUSTRALIANS SAY THAT WITH MINERALS ACCOUNTING FOR SOME 30 PERCENT OF COUNTRY'S EXPORTS, EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON MINERALS MARKETING, INVESTMENTS, AND PRODUCTION DEVELOP-

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MENTS IS SEEN TO BE CRITICAL TO THE GOA. IN SENSITIVE
AREAS SUCH AS IN NICKEL THE AUSTRALIANS APPARENTLY HAVE
EVERY INTENTION OF PURSUING THEIR IDEA FOR A STUDY GROUP.
THEY SAY THAT THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE CANADIANS HAVE BEEN
VERY POSITIVE, WITH THE FRENCH ALSO VERY POSITIVE, THAT THE
JAPANESE HAVE BEEN VERY CAUTIOUS AND NON-COMMITAL AND THE
WEST GERMANS VERY NEGATIVE PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS ANY
POSSIBILITY OF MARKET INTERVENTION AS IS THE CASE WITH THE
USG. THEY SAID THEY HAVE HAD PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS WITH
THE INDONESIANS AS A RESULT OF LATERITIC DEPOSIT DEVELOPMENTS
THERE AND HAVE HAD SIMILAR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS WITH THE
PHILIPPINES.

3. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, A GOA STUDY TEAM WILL BE IN
AUSTRALIA IN LATE AUGUST TO REVIEW THE INCREASING RELIANCE
OF US INDUSTRY ON FOREIGN PROCESSED AND RAW MATERIALS.
IT HAPPENS THAT THE MINERALS AND COMMODITY POLICY OFFICERS
CONCERNED WITH NICKEL WILL BE FACTORED INTO THE MEETINGS
THE GOA TEAM WILL HAVE IN CANBERRA AND THE AUSTRALIANS
APPARENTLY HAVE EVERY INTENTION ALSO OF AIRING THEIR VIEWS
ON THE STUDY GROUP IDEA WITH THE GAO TEAM. FOR THE
DEPARTMENT'S INFORMATION, THE GOA IS BEEFING UP ITS
MINERALS EXPERTS AROUND THE WORLD FOR PURPOSE OF REPORTING
IN GREATER DEPTH AND DETAIL ON MINERALS DEVELOPMENTS OF
INTEREST TO AUSTRALIA AND PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS STRATEGIC
MINERALS AND THE COMPETITIVE SITUATION AROUND THE WORLD.
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THEY MOST RECENTLY HAVE ASSIGNED A MAN TO BRUSSELS, ARE
ASSIGNING ONE OF THEIR TOP MINERALS EXPERTS TO OTTAWA THIS MONTH,
TO BRAZIL, AND ARE LOOKING SERIOUSLY AT THE AFRICAN SITUATION
FROM WHICH THEY NOW HAVE VIRTUALLY NO EXPERT REPORTING
CAPABILITY.
ALSTON

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